



Environmental Fact Sheet

LISTING OF WASTES FROM PRIMARY TREATMENT OF OILY WASTEWATERS

BACKGROUND

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to designate or "list" wastes as hazardous. Listings are used to capture specifically identified wastestreams that may not be captured by "characteristic" criteria. A listed waste has been determined to have hazardous constituents present at levels that may pose a threat to human health and the environment, and must be handled as hazardous from "cradle to grave".

On May 19, 1980, EPA published a list of hazardous wastes that included five wastes generated by the petroleum refining industry. Two of these wastes result from the separation of oils and solids from oily wastewaters in certain treatment units. The two wastes are referred to as "API Separator sludge" and "Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) float." Following the 1980 rulemaking, the Agency received and favorably reviewed a petition that proposed expanded listings including *all* oily sludges and/or floats generated in the primary treatment of petroleum refinery wastewaters, regardless of the type of treatment unit used.

In response to comments on that proposal, EPA undertook a comprehensive waste-characterization effort to further strengthen the bases for expanding the listings to include the wastes in question. Data gathered in this effort and further clarifications were published in the *Federal Register* on February 11, 1985, and on April 13, 1988.

ACTION

Under this rulemaking, all oil/water/solids separator sludges and/or floats generated in the primary treatment of oily wastewaters from petroleum refining would be regulated as listed hazardous wastes under RCRA and Superfund.

Specifically not included in this listing are: (1) the existing K048 and K051 listings; (2) sludges generated in stormwater units that do not receive dry weather flow; (3) sludges generated in aggressive biological treatment units; and (4) sludges generated in additional units after wastewaters have been treated in aggressive biological treatment units.

CONCLUSION

The sludges subject to this listing are generated by over 100 refineries at an estimated rate of as much as 300,000 metric tons each year. EPA is taking this action because when improperly managed, the sludges pose a substantial present and potential hazard to human health and the environment through accidental groundwater contamination.

CONTACT

For further information, or to order a copy of the *Federal Register* notice, please contact the RCRA/Superfund Hotline Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST. The national toll-free number is (800) 424-9346 or TDD (800) 553-7672 for the hearing impaired. In Washington, D.C., the number is (202) 382-3000 or TDD (202) 475-9652.